

**LISTING OF THE CLAIMS**

The following is a complete listing of revised claims with a status identifier in parentheses.

**Listing of the Claims:**

1. (Original) A method of providing incentives to managers for managing a business leading to ownership thereof, comprising:

selecting a candidate to serve as a manager of the business;

setting a predetermined amount of time before the manager can purchase the business;

setting the initial purchase price of the business in advance of the purchase;

allowing for the reduction of the initial purchase price and/or franchise fee based on discounts earned by the manager during the predetermined amount of time; and

allowing the manager to buy the business at the end of the predetermined amount of time, wherein the final purchase price is based on the initial purchase price and/or franchise fee minus the amount of discounts earned by the manager.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the recruiting step comprises requiring the candidate to pre-qualify for financing on the initial purchase price of the business before the predetermined amount of time begins.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the manager is required to pay a deposit at the beginning of the predetermined amount of time, wherein the deposit can be applied toward the final purchase price of the business.
4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the manager can earn a salary plus one or more discounts based on performance and/or time that can be applied toward the final purchase price and/or franchise fee of the business.
5. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein the initial purchase price of the business is determined prior to the predetermined amount of time and based on the value of the business at that time.
6. (Original) The method of Claim 5, wherein the value of the business is determined on the basis of past annual sales of the business.
7. (Original) The method of Claim 6, wherein the value of the business is determined on the basis of the past 2 years average annual sales of the business.
8. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein the discounts to be applied to the purchase price and/or franchise fee are based on increases in sales and/or profits obtained by the business during the predetermined amount of time.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein the manager is employed during the predetermined amount of time and can earn one or more bonuses based on sales and/or profits earned by the business during any given period.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 9, wherein the bonuses and/or discounts are dependent on the manager meeting certain performance criteria and/or standards.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein a savings account is set up into which the manager and/or owner of the business can contribute, and training is provided by the business to the manager.

12. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the financing is offered and provided to the manager by the owner of the business.

13. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the business is required to meet certain cash flow expectations as a condition of allowing the manager to purchase the business at the end of the predetermined amount of time.

14. (Original) A method of providing a manager of a business an opportunity to own the business that is being managed, comprising:

selecting a candidate to act as the manager of the business;

setting a predetermined amount of time before the manager can purchase the business;

determining the expected purchase price of the business and requiring

the candidate to pre-qualify for financing, in advance of the predetermined amount of time, needed to purchase the business at the end of the predetermined amount of time;

providing incentives to the manager by allowing for the reduction of the cost of purchasing the business based on discounts earned during the predetermined amount of time; and

providing financing to allow the manager to buy the business at the end of the predetermined amount of time, wherein the cost of purchasing the business is reduced by the amount of discounts earned by the manager during the predetermined amount of time.

15. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the manager is required to pay a deposit at the beginning of the predetermined amount of time, wherein the deposit can be applied toward the cost of purchasing the business.

16. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the purchase price, upon which the advanced pre-qualification is based, is substantially fixed in advance of the predetermined amount of time.

17. (Original) The method of Claim 16, wherein the substantially fixed purchase price of the business is based on the value of the business at that time, wherein the value of the business is determined on the basis of past annual sales of the business.

18. (Original) The method of Claim 17, wherein the manager can earn a salary plus one or more discounts based on performance and/or time that can be applied toward the purchase price and/or franchise fee of the business at the end of the predetermined amount of time.

19. (Original) The method of Claim 18, wherein the discounts to be applied to the purchase price and/or franchise fee are based on increases in sales and/or profits obtained by the business under the manager's management.

20. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the manager is employed by the business and can earn a salary plus one or more bonuses based on sales and/or profits earned by the business during any given period.

21. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the discounts are dependent on the manager meeting certain performance criteria and/or standards relating to cost control and cash flow measures.

22. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein a savings account can be set up into which the manager and/or owner of the business can contribute.

23. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the owner of the business is required to renovate the business property at a predetermined time, subject to the manager meeting certain criteria.

24. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the business is required to meet certain cash flow expectations as a condition of allowing the manager to purchase the business at the end of the predetermined amount of time.

25. (Original) A method of implementing incentives for managing a business leading to ownership thereof, comprising:

providing for the selection of a candidate that can serve as a manager of the business;

providing for the setting of the purchase price of the business based on past performance of the business;

providing for the manager to be employed in a manner that enables the manager to earn one or more bonuses and/or discounts;

providing for the reduction of the purchase price of the business based on the bonuses and/or discounts that are earned; and

allowing for the manager to buy the business at the reduced price after a predetermined amount of time.

26. (Original) A method of providing a manager of a business an opportunity to own the business that is being managed, comprising:

selecting a candidate to act as the manager of the business;

setting a predetermined amount of time before the manager can purchase the business;

allowing the manager to work as a manager of the business during the predetermined amount of time;

providing incentives the manager to earn discounts that can be applied

toward the purchase of the business; and

providing financing to allow the manager to buy the business at the end of the predetermined amount of time, wherein the cost of purchasing the business is reduced by the amount of discounts earned by the manger during the predetermined amount of time.

27. (Original) The method of Claim 26, wherein the candidate is required to pre-qualify for financing needed to purchase the business in advance of the predetermined amount of time.

28. (Original) The method of Claim 27, wherein the purchase price, upon which the advanced pre-qualification is based, is substantially fixed before the predetermined amount of time begins.

29. (Original) The method of Claim 26, wherein the manager is allowed to buy a business that is different from the one that the manager has been employed to manage.

30. (Original) A method of providing a manager/employee of a business an opportunity to own the business that is being managed, comprising:

setting a predetermined amount of time before the manager/employee can purchase the business;

determining and setting the purchase price of the business in advance of the predetermined amount of time;

allowing the manager/employee to work as a manager and/or employee of the business during the predetermined amount of time; and

providing financing to allow the manager/employee to buy the business at the end of the predetermined amount of time, wherein the cost of purchasing the business is based on the purchase price that has been set in advance.

31. (Original) The method of Claim 30, wherein the manager/employee is required to pre-qualify for financing based on the purchase price in advance of the predetermined amount of time.

32. (Original) The method of Claim 30, wherein the manager/employee can earn discounts that can be applied toward the purchase price of the business to reduce the cost of purchasing the business at the end of the predetermined amount of time.

33. (Original) A method of recruiting managers leading to ownership of a business, comprising:

providing for the selection of a candidate that can serve as a manager of a business;

providing for the setting of the purchase price of the business;

providing for the manager to be employed in a manner that enables the manager to earn one or more bonuses and/or discounts;

providing for the reduction of the purchase price of the business based on the bonuses and/or discounts that are earned; and

allowing for the manager to buy the business at a reduced price after a predetermined amount of time.